



[www.boosterseat.gov](http://www.boosterseat.gov)

## CPS/VALENTINE'S PLANNER TALKING POINTS & FACT SHEET

### Booster Seats Protect Children and Save Lives

- Every year children suffer needless injury. Children ages 4 to 8 who use booster seats are 59 percent less likely to be injured in a car crash than children who are restrained only by a safety belt, according to a study by Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP). According to NHTSA, motor vehicle traffic crashes were the leading cause of death for every age 3 through 33.
- A positive relationship between drivers using safety belts and children being restrained shows 92 percent of the children who were transported by belted drivers were restrained compared to only 62 percent of the children transported by unbelted drivers.
- While 98 percent of America's infants (under age 1) and 89 percent of children ages 1 to 4 are now regularly restrained, far too few kids ages 4 to 8 are restrained *properly* for their size and age. Only 10 percent to 20 percent of children ages 4 to 8 who should be using booster seats to protect them are actually *in* them.
- Children ages 4 to 8 are generally too small for adult safety belts (which lay incorrectly on their necks and along their stomachs). These kids need a "boost" to ensure the safety belt will fit securely across their chests, and low and snug across their hips—to help prevent internal injuries, neck, head and spinal injuries, and even ejection and death in the event of a crash.

### If They're Under 4'9", They NEED a Booster Seat

- As children grow, how they sit safely in a car, truck, van or SUV changes. For maximum child passenger safety, parents and caregivers need to remember and follow the *4 Steps for Kids*:
  1. Use rear-facing infant seats in the back seat from birth to at least one year of age and at least 20 pounds;
  2. Use forward-facing toddler seats in the back seat from age one and 20 pounds to about age four and 40 pounds;
  3. Use booster seats in the back seat from about age four to at least age eight—unless the child is 4' 9" or taller; and
  4. Use safety belts in the back seat at age eight or older or taller than 4' 9".
- It is imperative to remember all children under age 13 should ride in the back seat.

- Some parents or caregivers may regard booster seats as a hassle to use or a pain to convince their children to use. But protecting the ones we love means getting past the temporary complaints and perceived hassles because the threat of potential injuries and the lives of children really are at risk. Use a booster seat because you love them.
- This year on Valentine's Day and during Child Passenger Safety Week (Feb. 12-18) remind all parents, grandparents, and caregivers to use a booster seat to raise their kids to the right height in the car. If they're under 4'9" tall, put them in a booster seat.
- NHTSA and the Ad Council have launched new public service announcements (PSAs) to inform the parents of young children that booster seats are the critical (but often forgotten) step needed between car seats and regular safety belts. The campaign includes new television, radio, print, outdoor and online PSAs. The new public service announcements promote the following booster seat messages: Raise your children right. If they're under 4'9", put them in a booster seat.

### **Protect the Ones You Love This Valentine's Day**

- Use Valentine's Day and National Child Passenger Safety Week to protect your kids.
- You can have an expert check for free whether a child safety seat is installed correctly. Go to [www.nhtsa.dot.gov](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov) and click on "Child Seat Inspections" to find an inspection site near you. Or call SEATCHECK at 1-866-SEAT-CHECK.
- All 50 states and the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico have laws requiring children to be restrained in motor vehicles. Make sure you know the laws of your state.
- For more information about Child Passenger Safety Week and the proper use of booster seats, please visit [www.boosterseat.gov](http://www.boosterseat.gov).

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